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By JOHN A. HODGES,
F. R. P. S.

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PICTORIAL LANDSCAPE PHOTOGRAPHY

By JOHN A. HODGES, F. R. P. S.,

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"LANTERN-SLIDE MANUAL" "PHOTOGRAPHIC LENSES," ETC.



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FIG. 13.

PICTORIAL LANDSCAPE PHOTOGRAPHY.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION.

Perhaps a few words to my brother photographers in America, by way of introducing myself and my object in writing this series of articles on "Pictorial Landscape Photography," may not be without value.

Photography has made, during the last few years, both in Europe and in America, very great advances from the purely artistic or picture-making point of view, and many who practice photography, and who possess, though untrained, the true artistic instinct, are desirous of learning how their technical skill in the use of the camera and lens may be directed to the production of artistic work. My chief object in penning these articles will be to assist them in fulfilling their desire.

Let me, however, at the outset, disavow any intention of writing a treatise on art. Many handbooks on that subject are already in existence, in which it has been treated by hands far abler than my own. I shall, of course, refer to those general principles, the so-called "rules of composition," in so far as they can be

applied to the making of pictures by means of photography, and I shall endeavor, as far as possible, to illustrate their application by reproductions from actual photographs.

It will be well, perhaps, at the very outset, for the reader to realize the actual position of photography as a means of pictorial expression. The photographer may say to himself: "This scene is very beautiful; it appeals strongly to my artistic instincts; I will photograph it, because such a photograph must necessarily be pictorial." But it by no means follows that that photograph when taken will be a work of art. The beauty or the picturesqueness of the scene may have produced in the photographer's mind a general impression of those qualities, to the entire exclusion of many incongruous details which the unerring fidelity of the lens renders in the photograph with an all too fatal prominence.

One of the first things, therefore, that the reader must endeavor to appreciate is that nature is not necessarily art, and that if we would be artist photographers we must do something more than produce literal transcripts of nature. We learn, likewise, that the lens lacks the discriminating power of the painter's brush, and gives equal prominence alike to minor details as to the principal object in the picture.

With all its limitations, however, photography, fortunately, is amenable to certain methods of control; were it otherwise, artistic photography would be an impossibility, and these notes could not be written. It will be my endeavor to instruct the novice in the various methods which are open to him by which he may modify the natural tendency of the lens to give a too

literal, or matter-of-fact, or commonplace rendering of the subject portrayed.

But in order that the reader may be in a position to follow the advice which will hereafter be given, it is necessary that he should be in possession of suitable apparatus, and, therefore, as a preliminary to dealing with the theoretical and practical aspect of the subject, it will be useful to give the question of apparatus some consideration.

The photographer who would aspire to the production of pictorial photographs must be properly equipped for his work. If, for example, he attempts to do everything with one lens he will find himself tremendously handicapped, and at times compelled to pass by subjects which, had he possessed a lens of suitable focus, might have produced charming results. What painter, may I ask, would attempt to paint a picture of any pretensions, using for the purpose only one brush? But how much more fettered must be the photographer who with one lens attempts to portray every scene which appeals to his fancy or imagination! Much of the adverse criticism which has been bestowed upon what has been styled "the untruthfulness of photography" is traceable to this cause, and is not the result of any inherent shortcoming of the process, but is solely the fault of the practitioner.

Considering how enormously the photographer is fettered, in comparison with the painter, in regard to choice of position and general arrangement of the subject alone, we hold that no photographer who wishes to be even moderately independent of his tools can consider himself properly equipped for his work with less than three lenses. Happily the question of expense

need not arise, because the single achromatic lens, which is the type I strongly recommend, is not only the very best that can be used, but is also the cheapest. Of these, three should be selected, their focal lengths being approximately one and a quarter times the length of the base line of the plate, one and a half times its length, and twice the length. These should be set in cells which interchange in one mount; and as they will

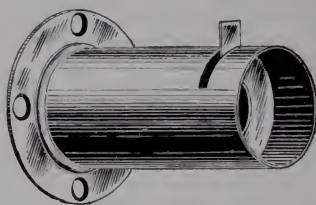


FIG. 1.

have to be frequently changed, a bayonet joint will be found much more convenient in use than a screw. In Fig. 1 I have given a sketch of a convenient type of mount, consisting simply of a tube fitted with Waterhouse or iris diaphragms, which any working optician would make for a small sum; there is not the least practical necessity to go to a great deal of expense.

Single lenses, as issued by the opticians, usually work with an aperture of about f 16, or, in some cases, f 11, but we suggest that the maximum aperture should be increased to f 8. It will be impossible to obtain what the optician would call "sharp definition" with this aperture, because of the defect known as spherical aberration. This, however, will be in many cases a positive advantage because it will enable us to obtain that softness of outline which is often very conducive

to pictorial effect. Of the use of the lens, and the influence of definition on the picture, I shall speak in another chapter.

Time need not be occupied in discussing the remainder of the apparatus. The camera must be rigid even when fully extended, and, as long-focus lenses will be used, it must be capable of considerable extension. There is no necessity for a great number of adjustments; a simple sliding motion is, I think, quite as convenient for focusing as a rack and pinion or winch screw. The front should have a considerable range of rise and fall, and a reversing back and double swing-back are almost essential, the latter not for the correction of faulty lines, for we are not considering architectural work, but to assist the lens in

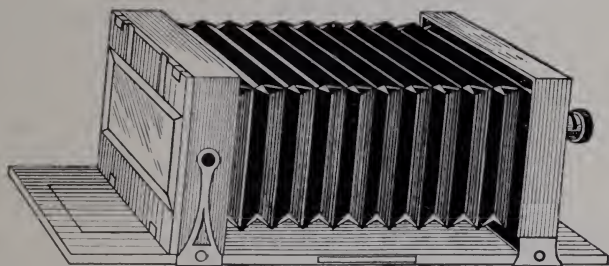


FIG. 2.

bringing the foreground into good focus without the necessity of stopping it down. Such a camera as I use in my own practice I have sketched in Fig. 2, and those who may be about to set themselves up with a complete outfit can not do better than have one constructed on these lines.

The shutter is a most important item — I rarely

use a lens cap for making an exposure, preferring to use a shutter of the type sketched in Fig. 3. I do not know whether it is obtainable in America. Here in England it is sold under the maker's name as Place's

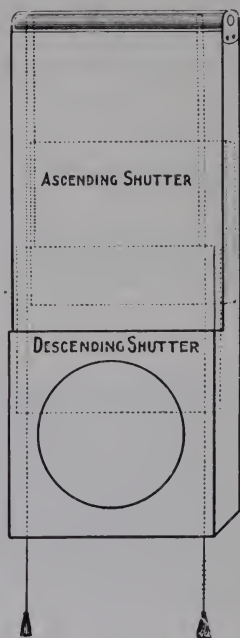


FIG. 3.

shutter. A cord on being pulled draws up an ebonite shutter, and by continuing the motion a second shutter comes down and completes the exposure. With it any duration of exposure can be given up to about the 1-10 of a second, beyond which speed the pictorial worker will seldom have occasion to go. Its great advantage

lies in the fact that a graduated exposure can be given, and the foreground getting more exposure than the sky, both clouds and landscape can often, when the conditions appear to be suitable, be secured upon the same plate. I shall have more to say later upon this point when I come to deal with the important question of clouds and skies, it being with many a debatable question whether the sky should be on the same plate as the landscape, or printed in from a separate negative.

The question of size is one upon which many readers will look for a word of advice. It is, however, very largely a matter which each individual worker must decide for himself. Size has nothing to do with pictorial merit, but at the same time it must be remembered that when we meet with a small work of great excellence we feel a kind of instinctive regret that it was not of more imposing dimensions. There can be no doubt, other things being equal, that size adds to the importance of any photograph, and our advice would be that as large a plate as personal convenience and the depth of one's pocket will allow should be worked.

The alternative method of producing a large photograph, namely, by enlarging the small original, naturally arises and claims consideration. In regard to the ultimate quality of the work, the results are quite equal, both technically and pictorially, to those produced from large negatives taken direct; though perhaps a higher degree of technical skill is demanded, the trouble involved may be greater.

On the other hand, those who adopt this method of working have larger opportunities than the users of large cameras, for a small, light camera may be made one's constant companion on rambles in either town or

country, and its possessor, therefore, is always prepared should a subject suddenly present itself.

The only danger to which the user of a small camera is exposed is the temptation to make too many exposures, upon subjects which may not be worthy of his attention. The small size and trifling cost of the plates also tend to make one less careful than would be the case in dealing with plates of large dimensions. The same degree of skill and the same degree of care must be bestowed on the humble quarter plate, or 4 by 5, as would be devoted to the lordly 10 by 12 or 12 by 15.

Now that this chapter is written, I find I have dealt at greater length with these preliminary matters than I at first intended, but recollecting that the beginner, as well as the more advanced worker, will read these articles, I am hopeful that neither space will have been wasted nor time thrown away.

CHAPTER II.

PICTORIAL METHODS.

After due consideration I have come to the conclusion that the simplest and most useful way of treating this subject of " Pictorial Photography " will be first to fully describe the practical details of working, so that, after having had the *methods* of the pictorial worker clearly presented to him, the reader will the more readily be able to apply the *principles* which will hereafter be laid down.

In the first place, if certain preconceived notions with regard to the technical quality of negatives exist they must be laid aside, for it may be often necessary, in order to obtain a particular effect, to purposely produce a negative lacking those very attributes which the technician would deem essential. The pictorial photographer, in short, does not seek to produce negatives of any particular type; his aim will always be to keep his ideal — the idea or sentiment which he intends to convey by means of his finished photograph — clearly in mind, and all through the various stages of its production he will work to this end. If the subject be a strong one, full of vigorous contrast of light and shade, his aim will be to get a plucky, sharply graded negative. If, on the other hand, the beauty of his subject depends upon its subtle and delicate half-tones, he will endeavor to produce a thin, flat type of negative which will most readily yield those qualities in the print. In

truth, the successful pictorial photographer must really be a highly skilled technician, but at the same time one who will refuse to be bound down by the narrow conventions of technic.

In general, it will be found that a softer type of negative than is commonly regarded as the perfection of excellence will be required for artistic expression, it being far easier in practice to lighten tones or values which print too heavily than it is to perform the converse operation with the lights of an over-dense negative.

The advantage of using isochromatic plates can not be overestimated. The little extra care required in their manipulation is amply recompensed by the far more truthful results which are obtained with them. Delicate gradations of light and shade and subtle effects of atmosphere can be secured by their aid, which ordinary plates would utterly fail in rendering. Particularly is this the case when photographing clouds, the difficulty of securing which, with even an approximation to truthful effect when using ordinary plates, is sometimes almost insuperable. Their great advantages are also equally manifest when dealing with subjects in which water plays a prominent part; indeed, it is hardly possible to do full justice to the delicate gradations of light and shade or the tender reflections on its limpid, luminous surface, with any other kind of plate. This advice is not prompted by merely personal preferences, but is further justified by the fact that nearly every photographer in this country who has attained to any eminence as an exponent of pictorial work is a user of isochromatic or color-sensitive plates.

The question of "focus" naturally calls for early

consideration. It is one that has possibly caused more discussion and greater divergence of opinion than any other connected with photography. No rule as to when a photograph should be sharp, or when it should be out of focus or fuzzy, or as to the degree of its sharpness or fuzziness, can be formulated. In every case it is a matter in which the nature of the subject, or the desired rendering of it, must be the guide. The mere fact that a photograph is made unsharp does not in itself confer upon it any artistic quality; nor is unsharpness by any means essential to pictorial effect in photography. A photograph may be eminently pictorial and yet have every detail clearly defined, and in support of this statement we may refer to the beautiful work of Colonel Gale, Robert Demachy, J. B. B. Wellington, and many others.

At the same time, it must be remembered that the tendency of the lens is always to give far more detail than will in many cases be desirable, and in order to avoid this defect certain measures for the suppression or toning down of the excess of definition have to be adopted.

Although no rule can be laid down as to how sharply defined any particular photograph should be, yet it may be accepted as an axiom that if the first impression created by it is that it is either sharp or the reverse, that we have at any rate in a great measure failed in our object. If the motive of the picture, the sentiment or idea intended to be conveyed to the mind of the observer, is realized, we shall not notice whether the details of the composition are either sharply defined or out of focus.

One of the readiest and most convenient ways of

securing what may be called a "pictorial focus" is by the use of a single lens, the aperture of which has been enlarged until the necessary amount of diffusion of focus is obtained. This result is arrived at by introducing the defect called by opticians "spherical aberration," and the presence of which is recognized by the fact that it will be impossible to focus critically sharp any portion of the image. A single lens used in this way is capable of producing the most artistic results, yet without any tendency to that excessive and in most cases offensive blurring which is often the result of employing other methods.

In order to practically illustrate what I have been saying upon this topic, I will refer my readers to the two photographs which illustrate this article, and the difference in the two renderings can not, I think, fail to strike even the most superficial observer.

It is, of course — owing to the nature of a process-block illustration, which in itself tends to remove the biting definition of the original — extremely difficult to show the striking contrast between the two original prints, but pictorially the difference is sufficiently obvious to make my point clear.

The illustrations are printed from the same negative, the difference in the two renderings being solely due to the fact that in one case the print was made direct from the negative as produced by the lens; and in the other, steps were taken to suppress or modify its excessive wiry definition. In Fig. 4, which in the block illustration looks less offensive than the original print, we have what appears to be an ordinary and somewhat commonplace photograph of a not particularly interesting subject. The first fact that impresses

one is the uniform sharpness of the whole picture. Every ripple on the water is clearly defined, producing that disagreeable effect of arrested motion which so often mars the pictorial effect of photographs of objects in motion. The masts and rigging of the shipping stand out with biting sharpness against the sky so clearly that we may easily, if we will, count each rope or stay. Indeed, we almost imagine that we can hear the remark, "how wonderfully clear the rigging is." But the object in this instance was not to produce a topographically correct record of a group of fishing boats at the quayside, but something of a more truly pictorial character.

Clearly then, judging from Fig. 4, that object was not to be attained by the unaided, or rather, uncontrolled, action of the lens and light upon a sensitive plate, or by what are called "purely photographic" methods.

The question then arises, can the bare photographic record thus produced be so improved or controlled as to produce a result which may be said to have some pretensions to artistic expression?

Let us look at and study Fig. 5 before we attempt to answer this question. It was printed from the same negative, but with a piece of thin celluloid interposed between its surface and that of the printing paper. The result is a general softening of the definition and a suppression of the wiry definition found in the first print, and we no longer feel tempted to count the ropes and spars or the ripples on the water. They are there, but the fact is not aggressively apparent; we are unconscious of the fact that they are either sharp or the reverse. The photograph pleases us because of its pic-

torial quality, which is mainly the result of the simple treatment to which it has been subjected in printing.

Its pictorial effect has been further improved in the



FIG. 4.

second illustration by a suppression of the scattered lighting which constituted another serious defect in the original print, a point to which I shall refer at a later stage.

Although the method of controlling definition adopted in this case was applied during printing and in some cases a valuable one where a negative is required



FIG. 5.

to serve more than one purpose, yet the plan which I consider to be the best is to suppress the excess of definition by careful focusing prior to exposure. By

"careful focusing" I mean just throwing the image sufficiently out of focus to produce the effect desired. This object can be attained most satisfactorily by examining the image on the ground-glass screen, and in this way just the required amount of diffusion can be secured.

CHAPTER III.

ON PERSPECTIVE AND ANGLE OF VIEW.

It is essential that the photographic art-student should possess a knowledge of the principles of both linear and aërial perspective, for although it may not be necessary for him to undergo a course of study in perspective drawing, his lens acting as draftsman, yet that useful tool will probably forthwith lead him into error should he remain in ignorance of the rudimentary laws of the subject. The necessary information can be obtained from any standard text-book; it is beyond our province to go into the matter in detail. Briefly, perspective may be said to be the science which governs the faithful representation of solid objects upon a plane or flat surface. In all drawings in correct perspective there is an imaginary horizontal line, the position of which is always at the height of the observer's eye, and on this line there is a point to which the eye is directed called the "point of sight," or "the vanishing point." The apparent size of an object is regulated by its distance from the eye. If it be near to the observer, it appears large; if remote it appears small. We can practically illustrate what has been stated by a very simple diagram (Fig. 6). The subject is an avenue of trees. A A is the horizontal line, B the point of sight. The position of the horizontal line will have an all-important effect upon the picture; and although it may be placed either high or low, due regard in assigning

its position must always be had to the nature of the subject.

Fortunately for the photographer, the perspective of the lens, whatever its form of construction, when used under proper conditions, is always mathematically

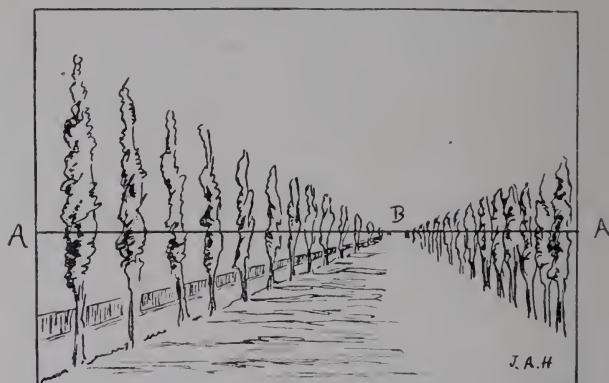


FIG. 6.

correct. We are often told that this is not so, and certain photographs are referred to as illustrations of the exaggerated or untrue perspective produced by photography. Such photographs, although they may appear to be glaringly untrue, are in the majority of cases not really so, as we shall presently prove, and are generally the result of a misuse of the lens, owing to the operator's ignorance of the laws of perspective.

The photograph of the man reclining in an arm-chair (Fig. 7) viewed in the ordinary way, strikes us as being grotesque in its violent foreshortening. The apparent disproportion between the size of the feet and

the more remote parts of the body is the result of using a lens of very short focus, which has rendered it necessary to place the camera too near to the subject. In this particular case the lens was but three feet from the sitter's shoes, and to prove that the exaggerated effect was only due to a misuse of the lens, and not to any inherent distortive tendency, we have but to close



FIG. 7.

one eye and look at the subject from the same point at which the lens was placed, and though it may surprise us, we shall see precisely the same effect as that appearing in the photograph, the shoes appearing of Brob-

dingnagian proportions and apparently eclipsing everything else, thus proving that the exaggeration was not due to any defect of the lens, but merely to our misuse of it. Had a lens of at least twice the focal length been employed, we should have had to place the camera at a greater distance from the sitter, and the immediate result would have been the production of a natural and normal effect.

It is not going too far to say that the great majority of otherwise artistic and pictorial photographs suffer from the inclusion of too much subject-matter, the direct result of using lenses of too short a focal length. For this reason we have already advised the employment of lenses of long focus, i. e., of moderate angle. No rule as to the exact amount of angle to be included can be laid down. It must of necessity vary with the nature of the subject, and the manner in which it is desired to treat it; but the inclusion of any element in the composition which tends to lead away from the principal object, or motive, of the picture, can but have a weakening effect.

Perhaps this fact is more strikingly demonstrated when attempting to portray mountain scenery with the camera than in any other class of subjects. Under ordinary conditions, i. e., using a lens with a focus of about one and a half times the length of the plate, the distant peaks which to the eye appear almost to pierce the very heavens, are represented upon the focusing screen as mere undulating foot-hills, while objects in the near foreground appear unduly large and out of proportion. The reason for this is that the lens includes a far wider angle than the human eye can, from a fixed point of view, possibly comprehend; and therefore the

photograph appears to be untrue, although, as we have already shown, it is not really so.

A lens of longer focus, and (used upon the same plate) therefore narrower angle, will, by including less subject-matter, or, put in another way, by excluding the unnecessary subject-matter, give greater prominence to the principal object and at once strengthen the picture by representing the subject in the manner in which it ordinarily appears to the human eye.

To illustrate this point and to make my meaning clear, I have made three consecutive exposures upon the same subject, without moving the camera, but using respectively lenses of 5, 8 and 11 inches focus (Figs. 8, 9 and 10). These show, in a sufficiently striking manner, the *practical effect of the use of lenses giving wide, medium and narrow angles, respectively.*

Fig. 8 was taken with the 5-inch lens, which, although by no means giving what would be called a wide angle when used on a $3\frac{1}{4}$ by $4\frac{1}{4}$ plate, yet includes far too much of the subject to produce a really pictorial result, or, at any rate, to allow of the best being made of the subject-matter dealt with. By the inclusion of so much unnecessary detail, the foreground, which should be the strongest part of the picture, is weakened, and the group of boats forming the principal object lose the importance which their relation to the rest of the composition demands. Notice, also, the uniform and almost biting sharpness of all the planes, which has the effect of destroying aerial perspective, the presence of which in all landscape work is so essential to success. This defect (as it must be regarded from a pictorial point of view, though the optician would regard it as an advantage) is due to the

property possessed by all short-focus lenses called depth of definition, which quality alone is one that makes it a less useful tool to the artistic photographer



FIG. 8.

than one of longer focus would be. Finally, the inclusion of the tree on the extreme right, with its bare branches protruding, is not helpful to the composition, and would have been better omitted.

In Fig. 9, which was taken with an 8-inch lens, we note a marked improvement. There is a much smaller expanse of uninteresting foreground, and we have



FIG. 9.

nearly succeeded in getting rid of the tree, though a few branches, apparently without support, still obtrude themselves into the view. The perspective effect is better, the various planes of the picture, foreground,

middle distance and distance, appear in due relation to each other.

But in Fig. 10, taken with the 11-inch lens, we have what we venture to think will on all hands be admitted



FIG. 10.

to be a far more pictorial rendering than either of its companions. Here foreground, middle distance and distance appear in due subordination to each other; by

the narrowness of the angle, only just the amount of subject is included required for the best and most pictorial rendering of it, and by the means indicated we have succeeded in producing something different to an ordinary topographical photograph.

These three photographs afford a good illustration of the practical necessity of working with lenses of different focus. In this particular instance, had I possessed only one lens, and that the 5-inch, I should have been compelled either to have put up with what I felt to be an unsatisfactory rendering of my subject, or have given up the attempt to secure it. My earnest advice to all who may find themselves in a similar dilemma would be to follow the last-named course, for it is always better to refrain from making an exposure if one feels that one's lens does not do justice to the subject.

I do not, however, wish it to be imagined that long-focus lenses are to be regarded as a panacea for all the artistic drawbacks and shortcomings of photography, or that their indiscriminate employment will necessarily infuse a pictorial quality into the photographs. Although improvement will probably result from their use in the majority of cases, the exercise of careful and well considered judgment will always be essential to success, and in forming that judgment the reader must be guided both by the nature of the subject and the particular rendering of it which he aims at producing.

CHAPTER IV.

THE SKY, AND HOW TO PHOTOGRAPH IT.

Probably no photographer who values his reputation for technical skill would nowadays permit a print to leave his hands with a blank white space in lieu of sky, although the time is not far distant when such photographs were common enough. But something more than mere technical skill in printing skies into a landscape in such a manner as not to betray the artifice of the photographer is demanded of those who desire to create pictures by means of photography.

The importance of the sky as an element in the production of a pictorial photograph it would be difficult to exaggerate; indeed, it often supplies the motive or sentiment intended to be expressed by the picture. Many an otherwise uninteresting — nay, almost commonplace — subject may be transformed into a thing of beauty by the introduction of a *suitable sky*. We would lay the greatest emphasis on the adjective, for unless great care and thought be bestowed upon the selection of the sky negative, both in the matter of the form and of the lighting of the clouds, the most displeasing and incongruous results may be produced. We must be careful to see that the lighting of the clouds is from the same direction as that from which the landscape itself is lighted. For this reason it is a good plan to use films for taking skies rather than glass plates, because they afford the opportunity of printing from either side. In

the matter of the form and shape of the clouds, we must observe that these are in harmony with the general scheme of composition of the landscape, to which they are wedded, and that due balance of parts is secured.

The student must be earnestly warned against the use of strongly lighted and generally underexposed and overdeveloped negatives of heavy cumulus cloud taken against the light — the ordinary “cloud negative” of the photo-store dealer; in fact, skies such as these will very rarely serve a useful pictorial purpose, though it may be well to include a few in a complete and representative collection of cloud negatives. Such a collection can not be too numerous or too varied, for however extensive it may be, the necessity will constantly arise of taking a special cloud study to produce a particular effect.

It is not to be supposed that the presence of sunshine is necessary to enable good cloud studies to be secured. On the contrary, it will be found that, if truth is studied, a soft, gray, quiet effect, which can only be properly obtained in the *absence* of sunshine, will be as often required as a strongly lighted and vigorous effect.

There are two points that must not be lost sight of in connection with the photographing of skies for purely pictorial purposes; the first is to avoid spotty or scattered lighting, a condition of things often observable in nature, but which, if perpetuated in the photograph, can not but detract from its pictorial value. Second, care must be taken to avoid an undue amount of sharpness in the cloud forms themselves. This can be secured by judicious focusing and by not yielding to the temptation to stop the lens down. In general, concentration of light and shadow — a harmonious group-

ing of broad masses — are the qualities to be sought, with at the same time an avoidance of anything approaching to a critically defined outline, which latter, if present, will mar the due rendering of atmospheric effect, which quality, above all others, it must be our aim to secure.

It is a much-debated point whether it is better to secure the sky upon the same plate as the negative or to print it in from a sky negative. Good results may be attained by either method of working. The first named, however, presents the greatest difficulties, both from the pictorial and technical points of view. It does not, of course, follow that the cloud forms visible at the moment when the landscape is to be photographed will be so disposed or arranged as to combine most effectively with the landscape to form a harmonious whole, and it is, moreover, always difficult to give the foreground sufficient exposure without overexposing the sky. On the other hand, we are less likely to fall into the errors of lighting or of producing the theatrical and often false effects of light and shade, which faults are frequently so unpleasantly conspicuous even in the work of our leading pictorial photographers. The technical difficulty of securing uniformity of exposure in sky and landscape may be minimized by using a shutter of the type we referred to in Chapter I, or even an ordinary flap shutter. The shutter in question is so simple in construction as perhaps to arouse the contempt of my American readers, whose predilections for "natty apparatus" are well known. But, apart from its somewhat clumsy appearance, the instrument is of undoubted utility, and has certainly enabled us to secure effects which by no other means could have been obtained. We use it

in this way: After focusing we carefully note how far it is necessary to pull down the shutter so as just to shut off the light from the horizon upward. Then, when making the exposure, we pull the shutter slowly until it reaches this point, and then increase the speed until the descending shutter reaches the same point, when, if necessary, we slightly pause before pulling the shutter right down. With a little practice the shutter may be so manipulated as to give an exposure of several seconds to the landscape and a mere fraction of a second to the sky. With regard to the pictorial value of this method of working, we would say that when it should be employed and when not is a matter that must be left to the discretion of the individual worker, who should be guided by his own artistic judgment in determining whether the particular conformation of clouds existing at the moment of exposure is such as to be in thorough harmony with the desired interpretation of the subject.

Turning to essentially practical considerations, the choice of a plate first claims consideration. For sky photography, *if results approximating to a truthful rendering are desired, it is absolutely essential to employ isochromatic or color-corrected plates*, either with or without a screen. With these aids it will be possible to secure printable negatives of the most delicate sky effects, to attempt which with ordinary plates would only result in failure. Whether it will be necessary or desirable to use a screen will depend upon the character of the sky or cloud effect which it is desired to photograph. Wherever there is much blue present then it is imperative to use a yellow screen to reduce its light action upon the plate. Without this precaution, in the case of photographing white clouds floating upon a

blue sky, we get the latter printing almost to the same tone as the former, and the result is necessarily flat and untruthful. On the other hand, when photographing late in the evening, or toward sunset, when the heavens are luminous with the red and golden rays of the setting sun, the employment of a screen would tend to exaggerate tone value in the contrary direction, the very yellowness of the light itself acting as a light-filter. In such cases judgment and experience must be our guide.

We have already advised the use of backed plates in all pictorial work, but certainly when photographing sky and cloud effects their employment is essential to success. Not only are they a great protection against the evils of halation which are often so conspicuous in cloud photography, especially in photographing against the light, when it frequently happens that a portion of brilliantly illuminated sky is brought in juxtaposition with a cloud in heavy shadow, but they are equally useful in securing detail and faithfully rendering the faint and delicate tracery of the cirrus or "mare's-tail," which it would be almost useless to attempt to secure upon an ordinary plate.

Sky negatives, as a rule, unless for some special purpose a very strongly marked effect is desired, should incline to thinness rather than density. The heaviest cloud effect in nature is always lighter in tone than the landscape to which it forms a canopy, and this fact must be remembered when developing the negatives no less than when printing from them. The greatest care should be taken to give a correct exposure, because although we may succeed in producing a printable negative, any deviation from accuracy either in the

direction of under or over timing can not but detract from an accurate rendering of the aerial perspective of the clouds, which it must be our primary object to secure. No great departure from the system of development employed for ordinary work is needed, nor is it necessary to recommend any special developer; the only point to be guarded against is the use of too strong a solution. In general, the best result will be obtained by taking a normal developer diluted with an equal bulk of water. We ourselves believe that pyro, by reason of the control which can be exercised with it, will be found most suitable. Care must be taken not to carry development too far, or the tonality of the negative will suffer. Err rather on the side of thinness than excess of density. During development carefully watch the principal light, and avoid getting it too dense to show detail in printing. When printing, if the gradation is good the secondary lights should have perceptibly discolored when the detail of the highest light begins to print. If, however, when the shadows are sufficiently printed, the tone values of the principal light and secondary lights are apparently equal, the development of the negative has probably been carried too far. Fig. 11 is an example of a sky subject in which these defects exist; the spotty and scattered lighting, it will be seen, produces a restless feeling in the mind of the observer and causes the eye to wander from one patch of brightness to another. In Fig. 12, however, we have an illustration of a cloud effect, in securing which the foregoing principles have been observed. Note how the concentration of the principal light, and the due subordination of the lesser or secondary lights, produce a feeling of unity and strength. It is this quality that we

should aim at producing when making our sky negatives.

But although we have so far confined our attention to the portrayal of sky effects in which cloud-forms



FIG. II.

more or less strong are the dominant feature, we must not lose sight of the importance of these soft, gray effects, which can be so truthfully reproduced by photography. We mean those soft, low-toned, quiet, misty

skies, when no cloud outlines are visible and the air is motionless, and the atmosphere more or less hazy and misty.



FIG. 12.

We have in the reproduction entitled "River Mists" (Fig. 13, frontispiece), an effect in which this aspect of nature is, we think, rather strikingly shown.

To have printed clouds into such a subject would have quite destroyed the sentiment and actuality desired to be conveyed.

Care must be taken in developing such subjects by tilting the dish, or applying bromide with a mop, to prevent the sky portion of the negative from attaining too much density, but this can be easily guarded against by making the exposure with the shutter, which we have already described.

The alternative method of obtaining such a sky effect in those cases where the negative produces a white sky in the print, is by "sunning down" after printing, an operation which we shall have occasion to refer to and describe later. It is better, however, whenever possible, to secure the natural printable effect *in the negative itself*, when a gray-day effect is sought.

CHAPTER V.

COMPOSITION AND THE ARRANGEMENT OF THE SUBJECT.

The mere photographing of a picturesque scene, however beautiful, if we eliminate the element of chance, will be insufficient to produce a pictorially and artistically pleasing result. The component parts of a picture, be they few or many, must be so arranged or disposed in relation to each other as to form a harmonious whole, and the rules which govern the due building up or arrangement of the picture are called "the laws of composition." It will be, of course, obvious that the photographer will experience far greater difficulty in conforming to these than would be the case with the painter. But, fortunately for the former, these rules are chiefly of a negative character, and although it is necessary that the artist-photographer should be familiar with them, it is by no means essential that he should too rigidly adhere to their tenets. The skilled painter, while observing a so-called "law," can conceal the artifice by which the particular effect he seeks to portray is produced, but the photographer, working on the same "law," may only succeed in producing a result in which the method employed is glaringly conspicuous. It is often said that rules "are only made to be broken," and this is specially true of the so-called "rules of art," which the reader must learn to employ with due discretion and judgment.

It is not within the province of this text-book to discuss in great detail the rules of composition. Burnett's "Essays on Art," and kindred works, should be studied, and, if possible, we would strongly advise the student to join an art class and undergo a course of lessons in drawing and composition.

Perhaps the greatest difficulty with which the student will be met will be in the correct translation of the gorgeous colors of nature into black and white. Many failures to secure a pictorial result are due to the failure of the photographic process to correctly translate color values into monochrome. The ordinary plate renders green much darker than it appears in nature, blue much lighter, while reds and yellows are reproduced practically as blacks. Isochromatic, or color-sensitive, plates are, therefore, for many subjects indispensable, and for landscape work, no less than for skyscapes — their advantages for which I have already pointed out — (Chapter III ante) I regard them as essential.

A complete knowledge of the shortcomings of photography in the rendering of color is indispensable to the student in order that he may know what he may attempt with a reasonable hope of success, and what he must reject. The ability to sketch an effect, though it be in the roughest manner, which it is desired to reproduce, will be found of the greatest assistance in ascertaining how any particular subject will look in monochrome when deprived of the charm dependent upon its color. The greatest care must be taken at all times to avoid being tempted by the beauty of local coloring to attempt the portrayal of subjects which for this reason are beyond the skill of the photographer to do justice to. It is this fact which makes pictorial landscape pho-

tography so different from painting, and often renders the advice of a painter, ignorant of the defects of photography, of little practical value to the photographer. Many subjects perfectly possible to the former are quite beyond the skill of the latter, solely on account of the impossibility of correctly rendering color value in monochrome.

It is a good plan to look at the proposed subject through a piece of smoked glass — or a piece of yellow glass — the effect of which will be to lower or weaken the local coloring, and thereby enable a more correct idea of the appearance of the scene to be obtained when deprived of the effect due to its local color.

That artists are “born and not made” is an axiom the triteness of which does not detract from its truth, and thus we constantly find photographers, who have not received any art training, producing work which, when analyzed, is seen to conform more or less to certain rules, of which its producers may be quite ignorant. These rules, so far as they affect the photographer, we will now proceed briefly to discuss — premising that the most important, from the photographic point of view, are those that deal with “line,” “balance,” and “chiaroscuro,” or “light and shade.” To the latter we have just briefly referred, but we shall have to recur again to it later.

If we dissect any picture, be it a painting or photograph, we shall find that the salient or principal parts conform to an arrangement of lines, and the success or failure of the representation, from the pictorial point of view, will depend, in the large majority of cases, upon the disposition of these lines.

This at once brings us to a rule, the non-observance

of which is one reason why so many photographs are artistically displeasing. It is a very simple rule in its terms, but to the photographer often a very difficult one to apply: "Repetition of lines should be avoided." Fig. 14 is a rather bad example of a neglect of this rule.



FIG. 14.

The photograph, however good technically, does not appeal to one's sense of the artistic, the reason being that we find upon analysis that the above rule has been disregarded, the picture being built up as it were of a series of parallel lines. The foreground, the vessels, the distant mountains, and even the clouds, may all be represented as so many lines running approximately parallel to each other. The photograph was taken in a locality which certainly is not lacking in the elements of the picturesque; the fault was in the selection of an unsuitable point of view. This reminds us, by the way, that when errors of composition are pointed out to the

photographer, one is often met by the rejoinder, "I could not do this, that, or the other; it was impossible to take the photograph from any other point of view." In such cases (and in photography they are confessedly very numerous) there is no alternative; if the subject will not compose satisfactorily, the temptation to expose a plate upon it must be resisted. If this be made an inviolable rule, your work will in consequence be all the stronger.

The illustration (Fig. 14) is an example of the best, having been made of unsuitable material, but the result



FIG. 15.

is artistically a failure, and except as providing an example of what to avoid, it would have been better not to have made an exposure.

In Fig. 15 we have a much more successful rendering of practically the same subject, and if we apply the

same analytical process we find that it conforms to another rule which bears a close relationship to the last. It is that "The general lines of a picture must be bal-



FIG. 16.

anced by opposing lines." By slightly altering the position of the camera we have succeeded in producing what we may consider to be a fairly artistic result, the reason being that we have obtained such a disposition

of the various elements composing the picture as conforms to the last-mentioned rule.

A curved line is always more beautiful than a straight one. Hogarth, it is said, used to demonstrate this by twisting a cane round an elongated cone, and one can not conceive a more apt illustration. A winding road, or stream, will often provide the photographer with the most graceful lines imaginable, and such helps to composition should, whenever possible, be availed of. In Fig. 16 we have a striking instance of how such an element (a rutty, muddy, snow-covered country road), in itself quite without beauty, may be made a strong feature in an otherwise uninteresting subject. Take away the ruts, and leave a smooth, unbroken surface, and the whole pictorial value of the composition disappears.

Continuing our critical analysis of the composition of a good picture, we shall find that "the wedge" system is one that is very popular with landscape painters, and one that may be adopted with success by the photographer. In using it, the greatest care must be taken not to have the opposing wedge-shaped masses equal in size, and also to see that the apex of the principal wedge is suitably supported. In Fig. 17 we have a photograph which has been composed on this principle. Let us critically examine it and see how the rule has been applied. The principal wedge is formed by the canal and the long hedge which runs to its apex just where the stooping figure is placed, which, together with the curved line of the path, give support to the wedge. We have, by the way, endeavored, as far as possible, to give photographic rather than diagrammatic illustrations of the application of these rules of



FIG. 17.

art, because to photographers we think they will appeal all the stronger.

Every successful picture must have a principal object, to which all other elements of the composition have been subordinated. In photography, where it is so easy to include and so difficult to eliminate, we shall frequently find that all our skill is required to conform to this rule. In observing it, however, we must ever be on our guard not to do so slavishly, or the artifice by which we have produced our result may be apparent, in which case we shall have failed, and that badly, for, as we have already said, the greatest art is in concealing the means by which a given result has been produced.

In most cases the principal object will derive its chief strength from the position assigned to it in the picture. In general the weakest part of a picture is its center, but to this rule there are exceptions, though a departure from it can only be successfully made under very favorable circumstances, as, for example, when the sentiment or motif is conveyed to the observer with such striking clearness that the mind is unconscious of the transgression of any law.

It is impossible to lay down any positive rule as to the position in the picture which the principal object should occupy, but if we mark out our ground-glass screen in the manner shown in Fig. 18 we shall be able the more readily to determine the weak and the strong points in our pictures. The point of intersection of any two of the lines may be regarded as the strongest points of the picture, i. e., 5, 6, 7 and 8, while the centers of the rectangles 9 to 16 are less strong, the center rectangle A being the weakest part of the picture. The principal mass, or object, should not be placed in the

center. If you can not be repeatedly shifting the position of the camera and altering the focus of the lens to succeed in getting a satisfactory grouping of the subject, do not be tempted to expose a plate upon it. But, on the other hand, do not give in without trying every conceivable position. Recollect that success may not always depend upon successful grouping, or a satisfactory arrangement of line; awkward angles may be

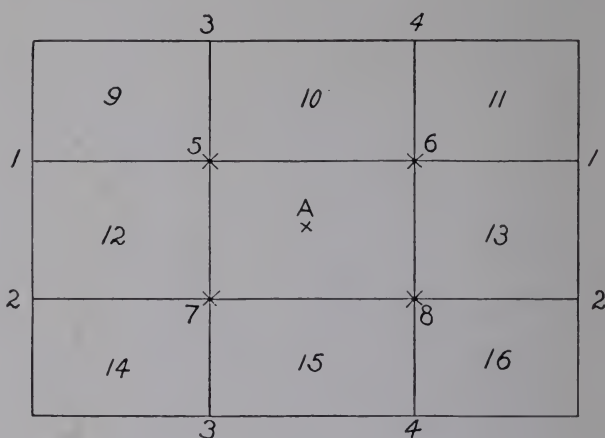


FIG. 18.

compensated for and balance restored by the introduction of suitable clouds, and a picture that transgresses all rules of composition may be saved by a strong arrangement of light and shade.

A modification of the wedge form of composition is the zigzag, in which the principal lines take the form of diagonal lines zigzagging, as it were, across the picture. We have an illustration of this in Fig. 19, "The Day Was Nearly Done." It will be seen that the pic-



THE DAY WAS NEARLY DONE.
FIG. 19.

ture is built up, as it were, on the zigzag principle: the line starts from the shore, then runs from the steps to the boats, back to the edge of the picture—a weak spot, and it would have been better to have lowered the camera so as to connect the foreground and distant bank, instead of allowing them to be separated by the water. The zigzag is continued by the line of the trees, which line is again carried back by the clouds.

CHAPTER VI.

SELECTION OF SUBJECT.

In regard to the choice of locality and the nature of the country in which we propose to seek our picture-making material, a few words of advice may not be without value. It is in itself a matter of comparatively small moment what the special natural features of the country in which we happen to be located are, provided that we possess sufficient artistic perception to recognize the pictorial possibilities of a subject whenever we come across promising material, and have sufficient technical ability to carry out our ideas.

Here the photographer is seriously handicapped as compared with the painter, for the former possesses only to a very limited extent the power of eliminating that which is unnecessary or detrimental to the subject. But, as we shall presently show, there are means of suppressing undesirable subject-matter and of emphasizing that to which it is desired to direct attention, whereby we may exercise more control over the final result than to the uninitiated would appear possible.

Many landscape photographers, we think, fail to realize the kind of scenery, or rather class of subjects, that best lend themselves to photographic treatment. Many appear to think that in order to command success it is necessary to seek the picturesque, the sublime, or the grand. Now, a greater mistake than this could not well be made, for scenery of this description usually

presents difficulties which are well-nigh insuperable. Simple subjects will, in the majority of cases, make the most satisfactory and pleasing photographs. Choose such, therefore, and leave the majestic and the grand to the painter. Recollect always that the ultimate effect will depend as much, or, indeed, more, upon the way in which the subject is treated than upon its nature. There are few subjects, however apparently commonplace and ordinary in themselves, that may not, by careful treatment, be almost idealized.

I do not recommend the plan often adopted by photographers, of journeying to a particular locality, and then tramping though it with the camera, putting up the latter and exposing a plate when something pretty or pleasing arrests the attention, very much in the same way as a sportsman shoots at anything coming within the range of his gun. Such methods should not commend themselves to the thoughtful pictorial worker. Picturemaking, whether it be by photographic or any other agency, is a matter which demands far more thought and care than can be bestowed upon it under such circumstances. A really satisfying and well-expressed result can rarely, if ever, be secured by such haphazard means. A pictorial photograph must be something more than a faithful representation of the subject portrayed: it must suggest the sentiment, or idea, or, as an artist would say, the "motif" which its producer is seeking to convey to the mind of the observer. Think out your subject well, therefore, before attempting to make an exposure, and do not be discouraged if, when you have done so, the result does not come up to your ideal; expose another plate, or six, or a dozen, and do not rest content until you have

attained some measure of success. The man who is never fully satisfied with his work, but is always striving to produce something better than he has hitherto attained to, will generally be in the forefront of his competitors.

Speaking of the choice of locality, the most successful photographic work, from the pictorial point of view, will generally be accomplished in districts in which there is not an overabundance of those elements which are usually supposed to entitle the neighborhood in which they are found to such epithets as "grand," "sublime," "beautiful," and so on. Amid such surroundings the very richness and abundance of nature's charms will dazzle the eyes of the photographer, and unless he be exceedingly careful, make it well-nigh impossible for him to produce a really satisfactory and pleasing result. It is extremely difficult for the most skilled worker to succeed under such conditions, and those lacking training and experience will almost certainly be disappointed with the result of their labors. All attempts at pictorial photography succeed best when the subjects are essentially simple in their nature. Let your constant care be to ascertain what you can spare and omit, rather than worry as to how much more subject-matter you can squeeze into your composition.

Let us take, for example, such a view as that shown in Fig. 20, which tempted us to expose a plate. The natural beauty of the scene is undeniable, and we were lost in admiration for the freshness and brilliancy of the bright spring atmosphere, the vivid green of the young foliage and the warm glow of the sunlight as it was reflected in a thousand glittering spangles on the young buds. We were dazzled, as it were, with all this beauty



FIG. 20.



FIG. 21.

as the eye wandered from point to point, and we did not pause, before removing the cap from the lens, to analyze our feelings or the motives which prompted us to make an exposure. We simply thought "how beautiful," and straightway made an exposure without stopping to consider what kind of rendering photography would give of such a scene. We did not for the moment realize the beauty of the scene was, to a large extent, dependent upon its color, and that the particular effect of light and shade and color which gave us so much pleasure would be reproduced in our photograph as an irritating mass of spotty lights and shadows, and that, deprived of its charm of color, the photographic rendering of the scene would be quite commonplace and ordinary.

To prove, however, that such subjects by suitable treatment may be dealt with successfully, we will make a fresh attempt. This time, however, we were careful to choose a day when the lighting was soft and subdued, when a "feeling" of atmosphere prevailed and the forms of distant objects were slightly veiled or obscured. We made our first exposure in the middle of the day, probably the most unfavorable time that we could have chosen, but now we purposely wait until near sundown, when the shadows are long, and the rising evening mist imparts a delicate atmospheric effect to the scene which is absent at any other time. In focusing, we, of course, bear in mind all that has been said in the chapter dealing with that important matter, and we take especial pains to avoid getting any portion of the picture unduly sharp, and refrain from gratifying any mistaken desire to secure unnecessary detail by unduly stopping down the lens.

We have chosen, it will be seen, to wilfully disregard an axiom which is generally to be found in the technical text-books, namely, to avoid pointing the lens toward the source of light. The same authorities tell us that the infraction of this rule will inevitably result in a fogged plate. Were it so, the possibilities of pictorial photography would be much more restricted than they really are. The truth is that some of the most beautiful effects of lighting are only to be obtained by working in this way. But at the same time, the system is one which, if unskilfully employed, is capable of producing the most unpleasing and inartistic results. Artistic knowledge and technical skill must both be invoked if the final result is to be pleasing. If you are satisfied that a particular effect is a suitable one for photographic reproduction, depending, perchance, mainly on a fine distribution of light and shade, rather than upon a vivid or beautiful scheme of color, then by all means disregard the conventions of technic, and, using proper precautions, do your best to secure a negative.

The chief practical difficulty is in avoiding chance reflections from rays of direct light striking the lens, or its setting, and so causing flare or fog. This must be guarded against by using a sky-shade or shutter which can be adjusted to shut out the intruding beams of light. We may very often effect the same object, even when working right in the sun's eye, by shifting the camera until we get a trunk of a tree, or a bough, to intervene between the sun and the lens, and so shut out the actual direct rays. We have an example of this in Fig. 22, which was taken with the sun shining full into

the lens, the result being that a very natural and pleasing effect of lighting was produced.

The second practical difficulty is in correctly estimating exposure. Beginners usually fail by giving too little, the consequence being that the shadows are badly rendered and all half-tone and atmosphere cut out and



FIG. 22.

killed. In such cases it is well to remember the time-honored adage, and *expose for the shadows*, which must be properly rendered if the result is to please; the lights will take care of themselves, and slight overexposure will only tend to reduce their hardness. In the example under discussion I gave ten seconds' exposure with a lens aperture of $f\ 11$, which many would probably consider excessive, but were I to repeat the expos-

ure under similar conditions, I should prefer to increase it to fifteen seconds.

There is only one kind of plate that will do full justice to this kind of work, and that is the isochromatic or color-sensitive, and it is essential that it should be backed in order to prevent excessive halation. I say "excessive" advisedly, for in subjects such as those we are considering a certain amount of halation is both natural and desirable, and, if we have any regard for truth of effect, essential. If we look at the sun shining through and behind tree trunks in any woodland glade we shall always see the blurred appearance which photographers call "halation." It is in many cases a perfectly natural phenomenon, and may with advantage be reproduced, bearing in mind, of course, that the tendency of photography is generally to exaggerate rather than subdue such phenomena.

Let us now return to a critical comparison of the two renderings of the same view which appear in Figs. 20 and 21, which have been reproduced on opposite pages in order to facilitate examination. Why is Fig. 22 so much more satisfactory and pleasing than its neighbor? The subject is practically identical, though, as we have already seen, it received very different treatment in each case. Fig. 20 fails to please chiefly because of its "spottiness," or the general scattering of the lights and shades, which has deprived it of "breadth," an essential attribute of a good picture. By "breadth" is meant a harmonious disposition of light and shade; and "spottiness" is the antithesis of this quality. The photographer will often experience the greatest difficulty in securing breadth of effect in his landscapes, for nature lights them with a lavish and

indiscriminating hand, and it will be frequently necessary to subjugate and control them by methods which we propose to describe in our next chapter, and which we have invoked in the production of the rendering shown in Fig. 22, in which it will be seen the undesirable attributes to which we have referred have to some extent been subdued or removed.

CHAPTER VII.

CONTROL.

I am fully aware, in approaching this part of the subject, that I am getting upon very debatable ground, and dealing with a topic upon which very diverse opinions are held, and one which, whenever raised, usually provokes a more or less acrimonious discussion. It is just this result, however, that I would endeavor to avoid, for no possible good and probably much harm is the direct outcome of such discussion, which, after all said and done, generally leaves the matter discussed in the same position as before.

Whether it is legitimate to resort to methods of control which are not of a strictly photographic character or not is an ethical question which I must leave every reader to determine for himself. At present the limitations and restrictions of the photographic process are sometimes such that *some control*, whether photographic or otherwise I do not for the moment pause to consider, would appear to be essential in order to produce a truly artistic result. And even if our photographic methods of reproduction had reached to a far greater degree of perfection than is actually the case, very seldom, indeed, do we find in nature a subject so perfect both in composition and in chiaroscuro as not to be susceptible of any further improvement.

While I am no advocate of brush photography, or the productions of that hybrid type of photograph

which challenges the question, "Is it a painting or a photograph?" I do, nevertheless, hold that it is both legitimate and proper to resort to any method of control that will tend to the production of a more artistic or truthful realization of the particular phase of nature which it is intended to represent.

Artistic photography, from the point of view of pure photography, is well-nigh an impossibility, for, as I have said, we can not find our pictures ready-made in the open. Nature, in short, with all its marvelous wealth of beauty, is not necessarily artistic, in the artist's sense. There are but few scenes presented to us by nature that a skilled painter would not find it necessary to control, modify or alter in some respect or other in transferring them to his canvas. How much greater, then, the necessity for the exercise of control in the case of photography, the tendency of which is to give undue prominence to minor details, to exaggerate contrast, and to give an untrue rendering of color values. It is true that by the due exercise of skill all these tendencies may to a large extent be kept in subjection, but the inherent disabilities of the process remain, and, I think, were one to shut one's eyes to the fact that by adopting certain procedure some of these difficulties may be overcome, and refuse to avail ourselves of them, we should only be emulating the example of the proverbial camel.

I would, however, at the outset impress upon my reader two things: Firstly, whenever possible, to avoid all semblance of "faking" and endeavor to see how near to your ideal realization of the subject nature and unaided photography will allow you to get.

Secondly, I wish them to appreciate that the suc-

cessful employment of controlling effect is exceedingly difficult of attainment, and demands not only the possession of the true artistic temperament and instinct to appreciate what is necessary to be done in the way of improvement, but also a high degree of technical skill to successfully carry it out.

I can not too strongly condemn the growing tendency to "improve" photographs by the direct application of brushwork to the print. Fortunately for artistic photography this method usually defeats its own object and leaves the subject treated far worse than it was originally, and produces a result which is anything but a work of art. Apart from all question of legitimacy, such work is *bad art*, as, indeed, are all hybrid methods, and, therefore, should stand condemned upon that ground alone.

This leads me to the true test of whether what is done is good, or the reverse. That test is *the result*. The question which the worker must always ask himself is: Does the method which has been adopted to secure the desired effect betray itself? If it does, then the work is a failure, for the greatest art lies in the concealment of the artifice by which a particular result is attained — a trite saying, but one the truth of which is not open to question, and which is preëminently applicable to the present discussion.

When any working or retouching of the negative is attempted there is always the greatest danger of doing too much, and directly this stage is reached, the method employed, whatever it may be, becomes obvious, and the result is failure. For this reason the simplest means are generally the more useful, and enable greater

improvement to be effected than methods which are more elaborate.

Handwork upon negative or transparency must always be executed with the greatest of care, or its presence will at once be detected. We do not recommend or advise its employment to a greater degree than the strengthening of a principal light or the deepening of a shadow. The photograph that falls so far short of expressing the desired sentiment as to appear to need the elaborate application of stump or pencil, that is sometimes met with in many so-called artistic photographs, in our opinion should be regarded photographically as a failure, and be treated as such.

Whatever may be its artistic shortcomings in other directions, none can deny the marvelous delicacy of the photographic image, and in this respect brush or pen work is hopelessly outrivalled, however skilful its execution. The two methods are distinct and can not be compared; how futile and hopeless, then, to attempt to combine them, as so many seem to be doing at the present time.

I would, by way of introduction to the more technical aspect of this question, suggest that in every case the reader should, before attempting to "improve" any negative, ask himself the question whenever the opportunity exists, whether he could not, by making another exposure under possibly more favorable conditions, secure a negative that would yield a nearer approximation to the effect desired, and only attempt "improvement" when all other methods fail.

Now, the character of the negative is, of course, an all-important matter, and the photographer who aspires to be a picturemaker must throw aside some technical

standards of perfection. A "foggy" negative, for instance, could hardly be held up as an example of good technic, yet on occasion its deliberate production and employment may be essential to the successful rendering of a particular effect.

The artistic worker can not set up for himself any ideal standard of perfection in regard to the quality of his negatives. For one purpose a thin, delicate negative may be necessary to enable him to reproduce a given effect, while to render some other and different phase of nature successfully a negative of an altogether different type will be required.

As a rule, particularly if after-treatment is to be resorted to, a thin negative will be found most useful and more amenable to "controlling" influence than one of a denser or stronger type. The most fruitful source of failure in attempting to secure pictorial results by means of photography is underexposure and a desire to secure a pretty-looking negative. In my own practice I habitually overexpose, and to this fact I attribute much of whatever success may have attended my efforts at pictorial work. It is difficult to describe the appearance of such a negative as that which I am now advocating the production of. No part of it — not even the deepest shadows — should be quite bare glass; a slight deposit seems essential to secure a true and luminous shadow-rendering. The high lights must not be too opaque, and a good test of their density is the behavior of the print during printing. If the high lights are of correct density the sensitive paper representing them should show plenty of detail and have sensibly discolored by the time the print is ready for removal from the frame.

I find that these qualities can be secured most easily by giving a generous exposure and developing with a weak developer. With regard to the latter, I always, except it be for experimental purposes, use pyro and ammonia, for not only does it give me more control, but it produces a negative of a character that I can not so readily obtain with other developers.

A negative of the type and produced in the manner which I have endeavored to describe will, if it does not give the effect in the print which is sought for, be found to be more amenable to after-treatment than one of the ordinary good technical kind.

The devices by which the printing quality of a negative may be altered or controlled are many, but exigencies of space will only permit us to refer to a few. As we have before said, *when, how and to what extent* they should be employed must in each case be left to the reader's judgment.

One of the greatest difficulties met with by the landscape photographer is *scattered lighting*. In monochrome work especially is it necessary to pay attention to the due emphasis of the principal light, and the subjugation of all secondary lights. The tendency of photography is to render the principal light and all secondary lights with equal force and intensity, a condition of things which necessarily tends to destroy that most important quality — breadth. A very good example of the kind of defect to which we refer is to be seen in the first of the two illustrations (Fig. 20) given in our last chapter. The light, it will be seen, is reflected with equal intensity from each tiny leaflet, producing a most irritating and displeasing effect. If we look at the next illustration we shall notice a marked improvement, the

scattered lighting has been subdued, and due emphasis given to the principal light.

This defect may be dealt with both upon the negative and upon the print. The latter plan is perhaps the most satisfactory. The improvement is effected by "sunning down"; that is to say, printing is first carried to the desired extent upon the sensitive medium employed—and it will be obviously easier to work upon a print-out paper than upon one that requires to be developed—and then, while the high lights are suitably screened, the rest of the print is subjected to the action of light, or "sunned" down. The method is one that requires to be used with care, as an untruthful result may very easily be produced, for the shadows and half-tones are deepened in the same ratio as the high lights, and the general tonality of the print may be spoiled. In practice, the print is taken from the frame and laid face upward upon a drawing-board, a piece of clean glass being superimposed. A handful of cotton wool is then taken and lightly pulled out until it roughly masks the principal light, and those portions of the picture upon which further light action is not required. The print is then exposed to bright diffused daylight until the desired amount of lowering of tone has been produced. Some considerable care and skill is necessary to determine how far the action should be allowed to proceed, and it will be necessary to constantly examine the print, and also to alter the outline of the masking material from time to time in order to blend the shaded portion imperceptibly into the unshaded portion of the print.

When the nature and rendering of the subject demands that the outline of the portion or portions of

the print which are to be protected from further light action must be carefully preserved, I take a trial print upon silver paper, and cut out the desired portions, and, after sticking them upon thin card, I use them as masks, laying them over the corresponding portions of the controlled print, and, if necessary, softening their edges with a thin tuft of cotton wool glued on. In this way high lights on water, rock or ice may be preserved and accentuated, while the surrounding parts of the picture are toned down.

Again, another method of procedure is to cover the whole print with a sheet of thick brown paper, and by lifting up a corner slowly and letting it fall back, a corner or any marginal portion of the print may be toned down to any desired extent; or it may be useful in some cases to cut out a strip of the paper to form a flap, which may be lifted up and allowed to fall back in the same way in order to tone down, for instance, a portion of a large expanse of watery foreground. All these are very old devices, but possibly may not be so familiar to present-day workers as they are to those of the old school.

So far we have only been considering how to preserve certain existing light, while other portions of the picture are subdued or toned down. But we have also to deal with the converse case — namely, the actual strengthening of existing lights. Here the *modus operandi* is somewhat different, and more skill and artistic knowledge to avoid the production of an untrue effect will be demanded. When work of this kind is attempted it will in many cases be advisable to make a transparency from the negative, the latter being much easier to work upon than the negative image. For this

reason, the production of an enlarged negative from a transparency affords a ready means of effecting improvement in the direction we are now referring to. We may deepen the shadows of the enlarged transparency where necessary and subsequently strengthen the high lights upon the enlarged negative.

Let me, however, again impress upon my readers that, although I am describing various means of effecting "control," that such are only to be availed of as a last resource. Let your aim be always to see how near to the realization of your ideal nature and pure photography will take you, and if you fail, and then only, invoke such simple and straightforward aids as those to which I have called attention.

It is, I think, rarely, if ever, desirable to attempt any pencil or brush work upon the film side of the negative. Improvement of that nature can be much more satisfactorily effected from the back, either upon ground glass, tracing paper, tissue paper, or ceba paper, the object being to obtain a translucent diffusing medium upon which to work. Of the materials named, I think perhaps that ordinary tracing paper is as good as any; it must be clean and uncreased. It should not be pasted all over its surface when attaching it to the back of negative, or the uneven marks of the brush will probably show in the print. The brush, charged with paste or cement, should be lightly run round the edges of the negative to the depth of about $\frac{1}{4}$ inch, and the tracing paper, cut to size, applied. When dry it should present an even surface and be quite tightly strained. Such a surface will afford every opportunity for retouching with either pencil, crayon, powdered plum-bago or black lead; the latter should be finely ground

and applied with a stump, or leather dauber. It affords an easy and effective means of lightening any part of the negative that may be found to print too heavily. For strengthening high lights a lead-pencil will generally be found the most satisfactory medium. B, BB and BBBB are the most useful grades. Work of this description requires to be executed with the greatest care and skill, or the remedy may prove worse than the ill which it is sought to remedy. A few simple touches will in most cases be all that is required. Elaborate handwork is neither necessary nor desirable, the mere strengthening of the actual chemical deposit on the negative being all that should be attempted. *If any evidence of handwork be noticeable in the finished print, the result should be adjudged a failure.*

Some few years since I introduced a method of improving faulty negatives which has in my own practice at times proved a most invaluable aid to artistic effect. It depends entirely upon chemical action, and is, therefore, free from the objections which some urge against mechanical methods of improvement. It is particularly useful in dealing with slightly undertimed negatives in which, although the general effect may be good, the contrast between light and shadow is somewhat too pronounced. When printed without further treatment such negatives often result in the production of prints deficient in half-tone and with harsh shadows and hard high lights. Such a subject as that reproduced in Fig. 23 is an illustration of the kind of print to which I am referring. It is the result partly of under-exposure, which has not been sufficient for the deep shadows, and this defect has been somewhat accentuated by want of care in development, the use of a too

concentrated solution having given further accession of density to the high lights. The result, from the point of view of the pictorial, is, of course, eminently unsatisfactory, but the method of treatment I am about to describe will be found to afford an effectual remedy for the improvement of negatives which produce such undesirable qualities in the prints made from them.

Let us assume, therefore, that in dealing with a strongly lighted subject, such as that which I have indicated, we have only succeeded in producing a negative in which the shadows print too deeply, and in which the high lights are more or less blocked — a negative, in fact, which yields a result such as that reproduced in Fig. 23.

The negative to be dealt with must first be intensified with the ordinary uranium intensifier, made up as follows :

No. 1.

Potassium ferri-cyanide.....	20 grains
Distilled water.....	10 ounces
Acetic acid.....	1 dram

No. 2.

Nitrate of uranium.....	20 grains
Distilled water.....	10 ounces
Acetic acid.....	1 dram

Equal parts of the solutions are mixed just before using. The two solutions keep well separately, but quickly deteriorate when mixed. After a slight washing, the negative is allowed to dry. If the washing is too prolonged, the effects of intensification will disappear, and the negative resume its original appearance. Up to this stage no improvement in the printing quality of the negative has been effected. Indeed, if we were



FIG 23.



FIG. 24.

now to take a trial print, which, for educational purposes we perhaps had better do, we should probably find that we had merely succeeded in making matters rather worse than before. It is true that we may find some improvement in the rendering of the shadow detail, but if we continue printing until we get out the high lights, we shall ultimately find it buried as before. The reason for this is, of course, obvious. Under the action of the intensifier, the shadows have been gaining in density, but the high lights have also been growing correspondingly opaque. The special utility of the uranium system of intensification will now become apparent. It is well known that the color of the deposit produced by this process can be discharged by the application of a weak solution of an alkali, and this property is turned to practical account by painting over with a camel's-hair brush charged with a weak solution of alkali — ammonia, for example — those portions of the negative which print too hard. This treatment gradually removes the red color, and brings the parts so treated back to their original condition before intensification.

In practice some care and skill is required to carry out the operation successfully. It will be found best to support the negative on an ordinary retouching desk, or a rough substitute. The ammonia or other alkaline solution should be very dilute, so that its action may be slow and well under control, and a glass of clean water, which must be constantly changed as it becomes charged with alkali, and a large mop camel's-hair brush should be at hand, so that the action of the solution may be at once checked. For this reason it is desirable to work close to the darkroom sink, so that the whole

negative may be from time to time well washed under the tap. Camel's-hair brushes of various sizes will be found most suitable for applying the solution if the surface to be treated is fairly large, but for small fine work sable brushes are much superior. One great advantage of this system is that if, by want of skill or misadventure, the desired effect is not produced, the negative can be soaked in a weak alkaline solution and brought back to its original condition, and, after washing and drying, we can carry out the process *de novo*. The operation, though somewhat lengthy to describe, is by no means a difficult one to undertake, and I have received the hearty thanks of many photographers, who have given it an unprejudiced trial. It may be that the appearance of a negative so treated will not commend itself to every one, but the very marked improvement in the resulting prints will probably be deemed ample compensation. As I have so often before said, and I venture once more to reiterate the opinion, this striving among photographers after the "perfect technical negative"—and that which in many cases is a false standard of excellence—is really very often an absolute hindrance to advancement. Those who are earnestly striving to secure more truthful and pictorial results than are ordinarily produced by photographic methods are well aware that it is by no means the best looking and "technically good" negatives which enable them to obtain the most artistically and pictorially pleasing results. The negative is simply a means to an end, though many, judging by the way in which they write and talk, seem to regard it as the *ultima thule* of photography. This is regrettable, for the unavoidable limitations are sufficiently numerous without creating avoidable ones.



FIG. 25.



FIG. 26.

Fig. 24 is reproduced from a print taken from the same negative (but after treatment in the manner described) as the first illustration was made from, and I think the improvement effected will be apparent to the most casual observer.

I regard this method as so valuable to the artistic worker that I have ventured to include two other illustrations from the same negative, one before and one after treatment, which are perhaps even more striking in their results. I may remark that in both instances the original print from the untouched negative looks better as a reproduction than it does as a direct print, for the half-tone process gives it a softer quality than it really possesses, and in making the comparison due regard should be paid to this fact. The subject was not altogether an easy one, on account of the lighting coming as it did almost directly from the front, thus causing a very strong effect of light and shade; but apart from the composition of the picture, which is good, its strong feature is the fine contrast of light and shade, and that effect I determined to do my best to secure. This attempt, despite all precautions, was only partially successful, and the best result I could secure from the untouched negative is shown in Fig. 25. As this was so extremely unsatisfactory, I then endeavored to ascertain whether any system of "doctoring" would enable me to secure a rendering more like the original scene, the beauty of which had so impressed me at the time of making the exposure. The negative was accordingly subjected to the treatment already described in detail, with the result that a print was obtained from it which gave me a fairly truthful rendering of the subject.

I doubt not that exception will be taken to the adop-

tion of such methods as those which I have described. But I would inquire of those who would so criticize them whether, when the artistic perception of the photographer enables him to recognize a fault or shortcoming, and a remedy is placed in his hands, it is not mere carping criticism to question its legitimacy and deny its application to the purpose in view?

CHAPTER VIII.

THE FOREGROUND AND ITS TREATMENT.

The majority of landscape subjects, if analyzed, will be found to be made up or composed essentially of three parts, namely, foreground, middle distance, and distance. In photographs, at least the majority of them, the chief interest will be in the foreground; indeed, to the pictorial photographer the foreground may be said to be the most valuable part of the picture. "A good foreground subject" is an expression often in the mouths of photographers, for even the untrained picturemaker seems to instinctively realize that in the foreground he will find the most pleasing features of the scenes which he seeks to portray.

A glance at any collection of photographs will demonstrate the truth of these remarks; indeed, a reference to the reproductions which illustrate this series of articles and which were taken to illustrate quite different points, will all prove the truth of the assertion. It is to emphasize the importance of the foreground to the pictorial photographer in selecting and composing his picture that we lay so great a stress upon this part of the subject.

We would not, however, be misunderstood; in art there are no inexorable rules — no laws of the Medes and the Persians — and many beautiful pictures may be found in which the foreground is only of secondary interest. But this will be of more frequent occurrence

in painting or drawing; in photography the rule we have referred to will usually obtain.

As a practical illustration of the importance of a suitable foreground let us refer to the illustrations which accompany this article. Fig. 27 is a view of a spot well known to English photographers, and many



FIG. 27.

will recognize the row of gaunt, wind-swept alders which form so prominent a landmark in the wide, marshy district by which they are surrounded. Now, our aim was to get a good pictorial rendering of these trees, but we found that, owing to the generally uninteresting nature of their surroundings, it was a task by no means easy of achievement.

The result of our first attempt is seen in Fig. 27, and from an artistic point of view it is very disappointing. For foreground we have a wide expanse of dreary, absolutely uninteresting, flat marsh, unrelieved by any interesting feature, and the trees themselves, beautiful as their fantastic outlines look, silhouetted against the

light, fail to impress the observer, but rather resemble a group of stunted saplings. This clearly was not a successful realization of our ideal, and we spent a long afternoon in tramping the surrounding marshland in search of a more pleasing point of view. In this we were eventually rewarded, for, after a time, we found a path and a high bank, which seemed to give us stronger and more definite lines in our foreground. We accordingly made a second exposure, with the result shown in Fig. 28. This is obviously a more pleasing rendering than Fig. 27, for in place of the blank, uninteresting



FIG. 28.

space forming the foreground, we have long, grassy hillocks and a picturesquely winding path which insensibly leads the eye from the immediate foreground to the principal object of interest in the picture, namely, the trees.

But we were not entirely satisfied with our endeavors, and wandering round in same locality one fine afternoon, after a heavy and continuous spell of rain,

we came upon a ditch which in ordinary seasons was usually dry, but on the occasion in question was brim-full of water. Here was our long-sought-for opportunity; a fine foreground for our trees, and one withal, that would strengthen the composition rather than weaken it. We soon decided upon the point of view



FIG. 29.

that appeared to give the best rendering of the subject, and exposed our plate, with the result shown in Fig. 29.

The student will find it instructive to compare these several attempts and with the aid of our criticisms, analyze their respective compositions. Besides the technical lesson we desire to convey by what we have written, we would impress upon our readers the absolute necessity of a plentiful supply and due exercise of perseverance and patience, two qualities that, even among photographers—a proverbially patient class—are far too rare.

The mere casual photographer, working in such a district as that of which we have been writing, might



FIG. 30.

have rested content with the result shown in our first attempt, and would consequently have missed the reward that a more painstaking search would have resulted in.

We trust, however, in our attempt to drive home these fundamental truths to our readers, we shall not appear unduly egotistical in our remarks, because any such desire is very foreign to our intention.

Before leaving the subject of these particular illustrations we would point out that, in Fig. 29, although the foreground makes the picture, yet the "motif" or principal object is not to be found in it. The dominant feature of the composition is still the characteristic group of trees, the importance and beauty of which the introduction of a suitable foreground with strong leading lines has greatly enhanced and strengthened.

As an illustration of a subject in which the interest unquestionably centers in the foreground, we would refer the reader to Fig. 30, which is essentially what is called "a foreground subject." Its attractiveness and interest lies in the group of boats on the muddy, reed-grown shore, and if we took these away we should at once rob the picture of any merit it might otherwise possess.

In dealing with foreground subjects some care is necessary in selecting the most suitable point of view. A mere jumble of whatever material the foreground may happen to consist of, will not serve our purpose or produce a pictorial result. For example, in the locality where we found the subject of our illustration, "Strand-on-the-green, near Kew," the shore is lined for nearly a mile with the "flotsam and jetsam" that will accumulate as years roll by on the banks of a tidal

river But however intrinsically picturesque such details may be, to indiscriminately plank the camera down and make a haphazard exposure would not, in the majority of cases, unless by a rare and happy chance, result in the success which a more careful selection of the point of view would probably bring about. There are, of course, occasions when it is imperative to lose no time in securing, perchance, a fleeting effect of light and shade, but, as a general rule, the photographic picturemaker should never be in a hurry, either in selecting his view point or in making an exposure. We have often wandered for hours together along the waterside hamlet in question and sometimes have been rewarded with a rich store of subjects, while at other times we have not found an opportunity of exposing a single plate. Had we done so, under the then existing conditions, we should but have been wasting good material.

In dealing with foregrounds, a great difficulty will sometimes be experienced in keeping the subject-matter simple and preserving a due breadth of effect. The first difficulty can only be overcome by a careful observance of the hints already given in selecting the point of view. Recollect that you do not want to include a great many petty details in your picture, each rivaling the other in attracting attention. One or two boats strongly grouped together in a riverside view, for example, will form a far more satisfactory composition than a number of little boats and accessories scattered broadcast over the view. In the one case we shall secure unity and breadth, in the other a number of distracting details which will negative or destroy both these qualities.

We must, also, be very careful in focusing a foreground when it constitutes the principal feature in our picture. If we stop down unduly, for instance, and make everything biting sharp, then goodbye to all aerial perspective and subtlety of expression. Although I am an advocate of the employment of large stops, yet it is often a mistake to concentrate the focus upon one plane in the immediate foreground, because the sharpness of the definition of the part focused upon will probably be in glaring and inartistic contrast with other planes, which, for the same reason, will appear more out of focus than they in reality are. In dealing with these foreground subjects it is better to use a single landscape lens, the aperture of which has been opened up *sufficiently to make it just impossible to secure critical definition anywhere*. This will give a pleasingly soft and round image which could not be obtained with a doublet, or indeed, in any other manner.

In warning the beginner against making any portion of a foreground study too sharp, it must not be inferred that we are advocating the production of a blurred or fuzzy image. In short, whatever method of working is adopted, we should not, in looking at the result, be conscious that the definition is either sharp or the reverse. Sometimes a trial print will reveal the fact that, despite all our care, the definition is too wiry and clear. In such case, a more pleasing result may with some subjects be obtained by printing through a sheet of thin celluloid.

CHAPTER IX.

LANDSCAPE WITH FIGURES.

There can be no doubt at all but that the introduction of a figure, or figures, into a landscape view, may, under suitable conditions, greatly enhance its pictorial qualities, but it is a power which the photographer must exercise the greatest caution and restraint in employing.

It is rather a debatable point as to when a particular landscape subject with figures should be strictly regarded as such, and when it should be treated as a figure subject proper, and in our photographic exhibitions subjects which should, properly speaking, be placed in the latter category, are often admitted as landscapes. In competitive work this practice often operates rather unfairly, for it is an undoubted fact that the introduction of the human element into a landscape as a rule greatly adds to the attractiveness of the photograph, and when the interest in the figure predominates, creates in a landscape class an unfair advantage.

In dealing with the subject, therefore, we propose to treat it in a strictly legitimate way; that is to say, only to deal with the introduction of figures in so far as they are an accessory to, and in no sense a dominant feature of, the landscape into which they are introduced.

The introduction of a figure is useful and helpful in

many ways, besides adding an element of interest to the landscape. For example, it will frequently afford us an opportunity of introducing a strong light, or a



FIG. 31.

deep shadow, in some part of the picture where either the one or the other may be needed; indeed, by such a simple means as this, a fine picture may often be created from very poor materials.

We have insisted upon the interest in the figures being subordinated to the interest in the landscape, and perhaps it will be better to give a practical illustration of what we mean. This will be found in Fig. 31 and Fig. 32. In Fig. 31 we have a picture which on one occasion we entered in the "figure" class at an exhibition, but it was transferred to the "landscape" section by the selecting committee. In doing this we consider a mistake was made, because the whole sentiment and interest of the picture is absorbed by the figures, and the landscape portion of it is entirely of secondary importance. We should not call this a legitimate landscape subject, but essentially a figure study.

In Fig. 32, however, we have an illustration of the introduction of a figure subject into a landscape in such a manner that the interest of the former has not been allowed to overpower the latter, and although the figure is placed in the immediate foreground, it does not arrest the attention from all else, but remains simply an accessory, as it were — an aid to the general effect. But while not constituting the chief, or paramount, interest, the solitary waiting figure undoubtedly adds to the general effect, and its absence from the view would be a loss rather than a gain.

On the other hand, had the model been placed nearer to the camera, in a more prominent position, or had she worn a white, or light, dress, the result, from a pictorial point of view, might have been very different.

In introducing figures into his landscapes with a view to enhancing the pictorial effect of the latter, the photographer will speedily realize the limitations and restrictions which photography imposes upon its votaries. Not only will he find the literal translation of the



FIG. 32.

human figure, in the persons of those who serve as his models and as given by the lens, often awkward, crude and unsatisfactory, but he will, as a rule, experience the greatest difficulty in obtaining the services of suitable models.

Above all things would I urge upon him not to descend to the paltry subterfuge of resorting to shams; that is to say, employing people to masquerade in attire which they are not in the habit of wearing. Such a system nearly always betrays itself in the stiff, *gauché* attitudes, and the self-conscious stage-player airs of those who act as the models. Have the real thing or none at all. If you think a young dairymaid, for example, would be an agreeable accessory in a farmyard scene, go forth into the country and find the actuality; do not be guilty of the enormity of getting your pretty town-dweller cousin to put on a sun-bonnet and pose as the milkmaid. These things, we are aware, have been done, and, by the ignorant or uncultured, have been applauded as works of art and held up for imitation to the student. But happily for artistic photography, these things are passing, and a purer, better and truer appreciation of the possibilities of photography and of its limitations is now becoming general.

When introducing figures into the composition, any tendency to incongruity must be studiously avoided, and at times this is a matter that will present no small difficulty. For example, we should not improve a picturesque piece of landscape scenery by the portrayal of a figure attired in the conventional costume of the day, in a prominent position in the foreground. Yet many otherwise clever photographers are frequently guilty of



FIG. 33.

this practice, and thereby shock the artistic sensibilities of their painter friends.

Before introducing a figure, always consider, first, whether the proposed addition is one that will really improve the composition, and, secondly, whether the figure (or figures) which it is intended to introduce are in complete harmony with their surroundings.

The position which the figures are allowed to occupy will necessarily have a very important effect upon the composition. They must not, as we have already said, occupy a central position, or form the chief object of interest, or motive, of the picture, but should be so placed that, while contributing to the general harmony of the composition, they occupy a secondary or subservient position in relation to the principal object.

The figures introduced should be in harmony with their surroundings; for example (Fig. 33), we naturally associate fishermen with a marine subject, and they probably would, if introduced, enhance the pictorial effect of a seascape; but rustics on the seashore, and placed amid the paraphernalia of the fishermen, would probably strike most people as being incongruous, and a shocking exhibition of bad taste.

On the other hand, the fishermen would be equally out of place in a rural landscape, while the villagers would be quite in keeping with such a subject.

We would not entirely exclude the conventionally dressed model from our photographs, for under certain conditions we may, even with advantage, avail ourselves of its services, provided, of course, that we pay due attention to the precautions already referred to and avoid perpetrating some glaring incongruity — such,

for instance, as including in the foreground of a picturesque view a person clad in a frock coat and tall hat.

As an example of what is permissible in this direction, we may refer the reader to Fig. 34, in which the



FIG. 34.

figure, though rather nattily dressed in everyday attire, does not seem out of place in the beautiful glen. We feel that it is natural to meet visitors under such conditions, and therefore are not oppressed by any feeling of the incongruity of the figure with its surroundings.

Again, in the next illustration, Fig. 35, we have a

group of tourists in the conventional holiday-making garb of their kind, but we find them under circumstances in which we should expect to meet them, and, therefore, they seem not at all an inappropriate addition to a very picturesque view. We call this little picture "The First View of Helvellyn," and apart from whatever pictorial merit it may possess, it is of melancholy



FIG. 35.

interest because it is no longer obtainable, the level of Thirlmere Lake having been artificially raised some forty feet, thereby entirely submerging the very ground on which the group of tourists stood.

It will be noticed that in composing this picture regard has been had to the tenets that we have endeavored to lay down in this chapter. The figures, although forming a pleasing accessory to the view, are yet subordinated to the general effect. This result has been

arrived at by not placing them obtrusively in the immediate foreground, in which position they would have at once arrested the attention from all else; but, by carefully posing them in an easy and natural manner, in the middle distance, any undue prominence has been avoided, and the general result is, we venture to think, distinctly pleasing.

We have spoken of "posing," and a word or two upon that subject may not be without value. Of posing, however, in the stricter sense of the term, we do not here profess to deal, carrying us, as it would, beyond the scope of this series of articles; but in dealing with country people some difficulty will probably be met with in getting a natural and easy pose. The great secret of success, under such circumstances, is to put your models entirely at their ease, and the most effective way of accomplishing this is by abstaining from any attempt at posing them, or putting them into a particular attitude. A few minutes' friendly chat, a pipe of tobacco in the case of a man, and an observant eye to note quickly when a natural and unaffected pose has been quite unconsciously assumed, will afford the readiest means of bringing about the desired result. Any unusual difficulty may usually be met and overcome by allowing the proposed model to engage in any occupation which is congenial and natural.

It may possibly be thought by some that we have bestowed an undue degree of attention upon this part of our subject, but we think, having regard to its importance, and also to the fact that so many fail when attempting to introduce figures into their landscapes, that we are more than justified in treating it in such detail as may prove of service to those who may be anxious to learn the reason of their former failures.

CHAPTER X.

SUBJECTS AND THEIR TREATMENT—EXPRESSION, ATMOSPHERE, ETC.

I have already, incidentally, referred to these important matters, but they fully deserve our complete attention. I have reminded you that photographs, if they are to be considered pictorial, must possess *motive*, therefore you will see how necessary it is that you should pay due attention to the selection of subject. Although it is quite true that in this respect the photographer has by no means the freedom of the draftsman, yet he has abundant scope for the exercise of his skill and need never be at a loss to find suitable material.

As a rule, the simpler the subject the more effective the result. The crowding of unnecessary details into the composition should always be avoided. A single tree, or at any rate a single group of trees, will probably provide a far more satisfactory composition than a whole plantation or forest. The use of narrow-angle, or long-focus, lenses, as I have already pointed out, will to a large extent prevent us from falling into error in this direction and at the same time enable us to impart dignity and impressiveness to our representation of the subject. Above all things, avoid a servile imitation of the work of others. Nature in all her moods, smiling, grave or gay, unfolds her charms before you, and it is for you to interpret them in your own way, using all the skill which you possess. By all means study the

work of your contemporaries and try to appreciate their aims and motives, but even if you are tempted to work in the same district, or on the same class of subject as other workers, endeavor as far as you can to avoid any imitation of their methods. Study the subject well, and in your treatment of it get as far away from any existing rendering as you possibly can. We have, nowadays, "schools" in photography, as we have in other branches of artistic work, but the student will be wise if he dissociates himself from any such influences. In our opinion, they make more for evil than for good, in that they tend to check individual thought and effort, for as a rule we find the weak many are content to blindly worship, follow and imitate the strong few who lead them.

There is ample field for originality, both of subject and treatment, open to the photographer. Artistic landscape photography is as yet, I fully believe, in its infancy, and we shall see in the future, with the introduction of new means and methods of working, results produced that would at the present time be deemed impossible of attainment. To take a single instance, but by no means a solitary one, no photographer has yet succeeded in giving us an altogether satisfactory rendering of mountainous scenery. Photographs of mountains are, of course, familiar enough, but their dignity, vastness and air of mysterious grandeur has not yet been adequately presented to us by means of photography. Surely such a subject may be deemed worthy of all the skill and genius that any one of you can bring to bear upon it.

The faculty of searching for and finding subjects is undoubtedly to some extent a matter of temperament.

as indeed in an equal degree is the manner of their treatment. I have noticed, as doubtless most of us have, that the fairest scenes in nature entirely fail to impress some individuals, while to others their contemplation affords the most exquisite pleasure, and between the two extremes there is a fairly long gamut, at any portion of which we may find our own place, reader, and according as it be far up or low down, so will be our ability to find material and give it suitable expression in our photographs.

In considering the treatment of a landscape subject, the faithful rendering of atmosphere is all important. Faulty composition, or even an uninteresting subject, may be entirely condoned if the sense of atmosphere is brought vividly home to the observer. It is in reality the pictorial photographer's sheet anchor, and, being so, no effort should be spared by him to infuse this quality into all his productions. The quality we call "aërial perspective" exerts a most extraordinary influence on the appearance of all mundane things. To practically demonstrate this, make the following simple experiment: Take a couple of black focusing cloths, those being articles usually in the possession of every photographer, or, failing these, two black coats. Place one a couple of yards from you, the other some twenty or so yards away, and stand in such a position that they appear to come into juxtaposition with each other. If you were told to paint these two coats you would probably think you could do so with the same brushful of color; why, they are black coats, and all black coats must be black! But a moment's observation will teach you what a great diminution of strength the few yards of intervening space between the two coats make in

their apparent strength. I say "apparent strength" because we know that both coats are equally black, and possibly cut from the same piece of cloth, the difference in tone being due to the intervening air producing what is called "atmospheric effect," or a sense of distance.

To obtain this quality all sorts of expedients are resorted to by photographers, such as focusing near planes in the picture, using large stops and thereby throwing the distance out of focus, and the like; but by far the most satisfactory method of securing it is to make the exposure under favorable atmospheric conditions, that is to say, when there is a sufficient amount of moisture present in the atmosphere itself to produce, without artificial aid, the natural effect desired. Possibly the damp, foggy atmosphere of England is a potent factor in the production of those charmingly liquid atmospheric effects which are so often found in English landscape work, and it may be that the clearer and drier atmosphere of America, or at all events of some parts of it, is the reason why similar qualities are sometimes lacking in the productions of American workers.

The lighting of the subject, or rather the direction of the source of light at the time of exposure, will also play a most important part in the rendering of atmosphere, or the infusion of that quality into the photograph. Select any broad, open bit of country in which the various planes are removed from each other with a fair degree of distinctness and observe the appearance of such a scene when the sun is behind you and the lighting is coming from your back. Foreground, mid-distance and distance all seem equally distinct, the lighting is flat, solid and wanting in luminosity. If a

photograph were taken under such conditions, as unfortunately many are, it would show similar characteristics in an, if possible, intensified degree. But view the same scene earlier or later in the day, when the sun is nearer the horizon and its direction more to the right,



FIG. 36.

or left, or even in front, and the difference in its appearance will be striking to even the most casual of observers. While the foreground will be forcible and bold in its play of light and shade, the different planes will appear to recede or retire as the distance increases, and the whole effect will be luminous and atmospheric, qualities which we may secure in our photograph by carefully timing the exposure and exercising due skill in the development of the negative.

The importance of securing atmospheric effect can not be overrated, and time and trouble spent in endeavor-

oring to obtain it should never be deemed wasted, for it does not matter how carefully arranged and effective the composition of a picture may be, if it lacks the mysterious, indefinable charm which we are wont to call "atmosphere."

You will infer from what I have already said that the actuality can not always be obtained at command by the photographer, and to secure it may mean the expenditure of much time and the exercise of no small amount of patience. As an instance of this I may refer to the view of Loch Voil (Fig. 36), in which, I think, the sense of atmosphere is fairly well expressed. To secure that effect, however, I had to wait for several hours. There was no doubt about the composition, the point of view selected gave as good a "line" effect as could be desired, but everything was bathed in bright sunlight and appeared hard and quite lacking in the quality that I wished to suggest. Toward evening, however, the lighting improved, and a soft mist rising from the water greatly aided the atmospheric effect which was alone wanting to make the subject well-nigh perfect.

The other subject (Fig. 37), was found at Burnham Beeches, and actually first attempted on a clear, bright spring day, but the birch trees and the dense undergrowth looked so bitinglly crisp and obtrusive that I at once destroyed the negative and made a second attempt under more favorable conditions of weather, with the result shown in the illustration. A great deal of trouble, some may think; but nothing good or satisfying can be obtained without incurring trouble, and a single good subject is better worth obtaining than a score of merely ordinary ones.



FIG. 37.

CHAPTER XI.

PRINTING, MOUNTING, ETC.—CONCLUSION.

Perhaps I can not more fitly bring these notes to a conclusion than by a brief reference to *printing methods*. Whatever may be his limitations in other directions, the photographer has here a wide range of choice, and by a careful selection of his process he may obtain almost any desired effect so far as the color of the photograph and the texture of the surface upon which it is printed will exert an influence for good or ill upon it.

I often think that in this respect photographers do not avail themselves, so far as they might, of the opportunities which the variety and excellence of the various printing processes of the present day afford. I consider that the photographer who earnestly desires to succeed in producing pictorial photographs should possess sufficient technical knowledge to successfully work all the better known printing methods, including platinum, silver, carbon and bromide.

Of the relative merits of these it is difficult to speak. Platinum and carbon have an undoubted advantage over the others in point of permanence. Printed-out silver prints in the main are more or less fugitive, though bromide, which is of course also a silver process, though produced by development, when properly treated, namely, thoroughly fixed and washed, appears to be for all reasonable purposes fairly permanent.

This raises the moot point: Should the artistic pho-

topographer use only those printing methods which are recognized as permanent? It is of course desirable that any artistic production, be it only a photograph, should possess the quality of permanence, and if the intention be to offer it for sale, the desirability of its possessing such an attribute is all the greater.

The three processes, platinum, carbon and bromide, will, I think, afford the art student as much scope for obtaining variety of effect as he will, speaking generally, need. It is not my intention to discuss the rival merits of these processes. A full mastery of the technical difficulties of working them should be obtained. As to which should be adopted, and when, is matter for individual observation and judgment. Be it remembered that art is independent of the method by which it is expressed, and this is as true of photography as of any other phase of graphic art. As experience increases and judgment grows, the ideal will manifest itself intuitively that a particular effect will be most readily gained by resorting to a particular process. Until that time arrives, trial prints should be made by different processes, and these should be submitted to a careful and critical consideration, with a view to determining which particular one most perfectly expresses the idea, or conception, in the mind of its producer.

When we have succeeded in producing a print which more or less gives expression to the sentiment we desire to convey, we may well consider whether it is capable of further improvement. It will sometimes be found, despite all our care in choosing the point of view and in selecting a lens to give us just the angle we sought to include on the ground glass of our camera, that we have, notwithstanding, taken in a great deal of

unnecessary subject. Here the judicious use of the trimming knife will stand us in good stead, and we may often with advantage use it with an unsparing hand upon what we hoped to regard as a finished picture. The tendency of the lens is always to include too much, and it is often not until we have actually made our print that we can form an accurate judgment in the matter. The conventional stock sizes of photographic plates are usually too square for the majority of landscape subjects, but no rules can be laid down for determining what proportions should be adopted, because what might be suitable for one particular subject would probably be unsuitable for another; good taste alone must be the guide. While I warn you against conventionality in such matters, I would equally warn you against eccentricity. A few years back we saw in this country a great deal of eccentricity in so-called artistic photography, but, happily, like all fads, it soon faded into obscurity. Recently the disease — if it may be so termed — has again appeared in America, and may its existence there be as short-lived as it was here.

A useful device for assisting in deciding upon the best proportions for a photograph may be made by cutting out two L-shaped pieces of stout card, one arm of each being longer than the other. These can be placed upon the print and moved about until the best result is obtained. The trimming knife can then be allowed to do its work with certainty and decision.

Perhaps a few words upon mounting and framing may not be without value when the effect for good or evil they have upon the photograph is realized. Many an artistically pleasing photograph is ruined by an unsuitable mount or frame, or perhaps by both, and too

much care and attention can not be bestowed upon the selection of either.

For some time past it has been customary to use broad moldings for the frames of photographs, and to dispense with mounts. Just recently, however, there appears to be a recrudescence in favor of large mounts and narrow frames. Both methods are effective when not carried to extremes. The use of very broad, heavy frames, or of very large mounts, is to be deprecated and avoided. In this country mounts made to imitate the plate mark of an engraving are popular with many people, but we object to them because they are a sham. A photograph is not printed from a metal plate, nor does the negative leave its impress upon the sensitive paper; moreover, it has sufficient beauty of its own without needing enhancement by causing it to clumsily imitate the appearance of a steel engraving. A plain mount of suitable tone, or tint, to harmonize or contrast with the photograph placed upon it, will always look well, and anything in the nature of further embellishment will generally detract from rather than improve the ultimate result. The color of the mount is all important; the whites and drabs and chocolates and bronze-greens offered by the store dealers should be avoided, for they will rarely produce a pleasing and reposeful effect. For all-round purposes there is probably nothing to surpass brown paper; but it must be of the right color, and unless you have used it for this purpose, reader, you will probably not be aware what a variety of color and texture brown paper alone will afford. Do not, by the way, allow the mount to be disproportionately large as compared with the size of the photograph. If the relative areas be as three to one the

effect will generally be good, though of course no arbitrary rule can be laid down. It is considered "good art" in certain quarters just now to place the print in one corner of the mount, or at one side — in fact, anywhere but in the center, but I trust my readers will not allow themselves to be influenced by such eccentric examples. In a word, and as a golden rule in endeavoring to form a judgment in these final but important details, always bear in mind that *simplicity and unobtrusiveness* are the best evidences of refinement and good taste.

My task is now finished. The work has been a pleasure, and in talking of my beloved art to my fellow workers in America I feel that I have made many new friends whose friendship will not be the less sincere because we are personally unknown to each other.

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